

## Message Text

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-07  
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
USIA-06 AID-05 COME-00 EB-08 FRB-03 TRSE-00  
XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 CEA-01 STR-06  
NEA-10 IO-13 ACDA-12 /128 W  
-----029267 171042Z /21/45

R 161030Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9389  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 SINGAPORE 00225

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT CORRECTED)

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: PINT, ASEAN, SN, VS, CB  
SUBJECT: SINGAPORE PRIME MINISTER'S COMMENTS ON ASEAN UNITY  
AND RELATED SUBJECTS

SUMMARY: DURING A MEETING WITH DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
OAKLEY, PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW SAW THE TWO MAIN WAYS  
IN WHICH ASEAN UNITY CAN BE REINFORCED AS MUTUALLY BENE-  
FICIAL ECONOMIC INTEGRATION AND CAREFUL ENCOURAGEMENT BY  
FRIENDLY NON-ASEAN COUNTRIES. ON ANOTHER SUBJECT, HE  
AGREED THAT THE RADICAL MUSLIM MOVEMENT, BACKED BY LIBYA  
AND OTHER RADICAL STATES, IS A WORRISOME PROBLEM WITHIN  
ASEAN, ESPECIALLY WITH REGARD TO THE MALAYSIAN PAS. ON  
INDO-CHINA, LEE SAID CAMBODIA WAS "MAD" TO TAKE ON VIETNAM  
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MILITARILY SO SOON AFTER THE VIETNAM WAR AND FORESAW THE  
ESTABLISHMENT OF A GOVERNMENT IN PHNOM PENH MORE ACCEPTABLE  
TO VIETNAM. END SUMMARY.

1. ON JANUARY 11 I ESCORTED DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
OAKLEY IN CALL ON PRIME MINISTER LEE KUAN YEW, DURING  
WHICH (IN RESPONSE TO QUERY FROM OAKLEY ON PROSPECTS FOR

STRENGTHENING THE UNITY AMONG ASEAN NATIONS) PM LEE  
OFFERED THE FOLLOWING COMMENTTS.

2. IN LEE'S OPINION, ASWAN COUNTRIES HAD ALREADY ARRIVED  
AT GOOD MEASURE OF ACCORD AMONG THEM ON POLITICAL MATTERS,  
AND THIS WAS ONE OF ORGANIZATION'S MOST IMPORTANT ACCOM-  
PLISHMENTS. HOWEVER, CAUSE OF ASEAN UNITY STILL HAD A  
LONG WAY TO GO. HE PERCEIVED TWO MAIN WAYS TO PROCEED:

A) BY ACHIEVING SUCH A LEVEL OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS WITHIN  
ASEAN THAT WITHDRAWAL BY A MEMBER STATE WOULD COMPEL IT  
TO PAY A HIGH PRICE; AND B) BY THE EXERCISE OF "SUBTLE  
DIPLOMACY" ON THE PART OF FAVORABLY-INCLINED NON-ASEAN  
COUNTRIES IN WAYS WHICH WOULD ENCOURAGE ENHANCED INTRA-  
ASEAN COOPERATION. IN THIS LATTER RESPECT, PM LEE SAID  
THAT THE JAPANESE HAD ALREADY CONTRIBUTED BY REQUIRING  
THAT EACH OF THE FIVE NATIONAL ASEAN PROJECTS HAD TO BE  
APPROVED BY EVERY OTHER ASEAN STATE IN ORDER TO BENEFIT  
FROM THE US\$1 BILLION FUND ESTABLISHED BY FUKUDA IN KUALA  
LUMPUR LAST AUGUST.

3. OAKLEY COMMENTED THAT US-ASEAN ECONOMIC DISCUSSIONS  
HAD EVIDENTLY RUN INTO SOME DIFFICULTIES AT THE LEVEL OF  
THE ASEAN AMBASSADORS IN WASHINGTON DUE TO A LACK OF  
GUIDANCE. MALAYSIAN AMBASSADOR ZAIN HAD SAID THAT HE  
WAS UNCERTAIN AS TO WHOM HE SHOULD REPORT OR WHERE HIS  
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GUIDANCE WAS SUPPOSED TO COME FROM--MRS. MANALO IN THE  
PHILIPPINES, THEORETICALLY ASEAN'S POINT OF CONTACT WITH  
THE U.S.; THE ASEAN STANDING COMMITTEE IN BANGKOK; THE  
ASEAN SECRETARIAT IN JAKARTA; OR THE MALAYSIAN GOVERN-  
MENT ITSELF. PM LEE NOTED THAT THE THAI FOREIGN MINISTRY  
HAD BEEN RATHER PREOCCUPIED LATELY WITH NON-ASEAN MATTERS,  
BUT MIGHT NOW BE IN A POSITION TO TAKE UP MORE FULLY  
MATTERS CONNECTED WITH THE ASEAN STANDING COMMITTEE.  
(NOTE: PM LEE'S SOMEWHAT NONCOMMITTAL RESPONSE ON  
THIS SUBJECT DOES NOT NECESSARILY MEAN THAT HE WILL NOT  
LOOK BEHIND THE SCENES FOR WAYS TO PUT MORE MONENTUM  
INTO THE U.S.-ASEAN ECONOMIC DISCUSSIONS.)

4. OAKLEY RAISED THE QUESTION OF WHETHER THE ASEAN  
STATES MIGHT BE ABLE TO GET TOGETHER AND INFORM THE  
ISLAMIC WORLD THAT WHILE THEY FAVORED STRENGTHENING ISLAM,  
THEY WOULD DO SO BY MODERATE MEANS AND NOT THROUGH THE  
RADICAL METHODS ESPOUSED BY COL. QADAFFI AND EVEN SUPPORTED  
TO SOME DEGREE BY THE SAUDIS AND KUWAITIES. PM LEE ACKNOW-  
LEDGED THAT MUSLIM IRRIDENTISM WITHIN ASEAN, BACKED BY  
THE ARAB RADICALS -- AND EVEN BY ELEMENTS WITHIN THE  
ASEAN COUNTRIES THEMSELVES -- REMAINED A WORRISOME

PROBLEM. TO BE SURE MARCOS HAD GIVEN UP THE PHILIPPINE CLAIM TO SABAH AND HUSSEIN ONN HAD "PULLED BACK" FROM THE ISLANDS IN THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES, BUT EVEN THOUGH HUSSEIN ONN WAS A "GGOD MAN" AND NOT PERSONALLY IDENTIFIED WITH POLICIES ESTABLISHED BY HIS PREDECESSOR, TUN RAZAK, AREAS OF CONCERN REMAINED. PM LEE WONDERED, FOR EXAMPLE, WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IN THAI-MALAYSIAN RELATIONS IF THE PAS, A PAN-MALAY PARTY IDENTIFIED WITH SUPPORT FOR MUSLIM SEPARATISTS IN SOUTHERN THAILAND AND UNTIL RECENTLY A MEMBER OF THE GOVERNMENT ALLIANCE, SHOULD REJOIN THE GOVERNMENT IN A STRENGTHENED POSITION.

5. PM LEE RECALLED THAT AT THE BALI ASEAN SUMMIT TWO YEARS AGO HE HAD SPOKEN ON THE NEED FOR THE ASEAN MEMBERS  
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TO SET A HIGHER PRIORITY ON COMBATTING COMMUNISM THAN ON PRESSING NATIONALISTIC CLAIMS AGAINST ONE ANOTHER -- THESE COULD BE SETTLED LATER. HE HAD SUBSEQUENTLY RAISED THIS SAME POINT PRIVATELY WITH HUSSEIN ONN, BUT WHILE CONVINCED OF ONN'S GOOD INTENTIONS WAS NOT SURE THAT THE LATTER COULD CONTROL HIS SUBORDINATES, ESPECIALLY IN LIGHT OF THE BREAK BETWEEN THE PAS AND THE GOVERNING UMNO PARTY AND THE POSSIBILITY OF GENERAL ELECTIONS.

6. APROPOS OF THE ACTIVITIES WITHIN THE ASEAN REGION OF RADICAL ARAB STATES, PM LEE MENTIONED THAT THAI MUSLIM STUDENTS WERE INCLUDED IN THE STAFF OF THE ALGERIAN EMBASSY IN KUALA LUMPUR, AND ALSO REFERRED TO LIBYA'S TRAINING OF ANTI-GOVERNMENT ELEMENTS FROM BRUNEI WHO WERE NOW BACK IN MALAYSIA. HE ALSO POINTED OUT THAT IMMEDIATELY FOLLOWING THE PAS-UMNO BREAK, THE PAS LEADER HAD FLOWN TO LIBYA, PRESUMABLY IN SEARCH OF FUNDS. ADDITIONAL AREAS OF CONCERN IN RELATION TO LIBYAN BACKING TOUCHED UPON BY PM LEE WERE ACEH, SOUTHERN THAILAND, AND THE SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES.

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L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
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XMB-02 OPIC-03 LAB-04 SIL-01 OMB-01 CEA-01 STR-06  
NEA-10 IO-13 ACDA-12 /128 W  
-----021653 161320Z /45

R 161030Z JAN 78  
FM AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9390  
INFO AMEMBASSY BANGKOK  
AMEMBASSY JAKARTA  
AMEMBASSY MANILA  
AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR  
CINCPAC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 2 OF 2 SINGAPORE 00225

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

7. PM LEE RECALLED THAT LIBYA HAD MADE A BID TO ESTABLISH DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS WITH SINGAPORE, IN THE COURSE OF WHICH THE LIBYAN REPRESENTATIVE IN KUALA LUMPUR HAD POUNDED THE TABLE IN HIS MEETINGS WITH THE SINGAPOREANS, IN EFFECT DEMANDING THAT SINGAPORE AGREE. SINGAPORE HAD NEVERTHELESS TURNED THE LIBYANS DOWN, SAYING THAT IF THIS WAS THE KIND OF FRIENDLY RELATIONS LIBYA DESIRE, SINGAPORE WANTED NO PART OF THEM.

8. PM LEE EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER THE FIGHTING BETWEEN THE CAMBODIANS AND THE VIETNAMESE, AND THOUGHT THAT THE CAMBODIANS HAD BEEN "MAD" TO TAKE ON THE VIETNAMESE AT SUCH AN EARLY POINT AFTER THE VIETNAM WAR. HE HAD FELT THAT THE CAMBODIANS MIGHT HAVE BEEN ABLE TO HOLD OUT FOR YEARS AGAINST THE VIETNAMESE IF THEY HAD BEEN MORE CIRCUMSPECT, BUT NOW IT LOOKED VERY MUCH AS IF THE VIETNAMESE  
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WOULD KEEP UP THE PRESSURES ON CAMBODIA UNTIL A GOVERNMENT WAS SET UP IN PHNOM PENH WHICH WOULD BE MUCH MORE ACCEPTABLE TO HANOI THAN THE PRESENT ONE. PM LEE NOTED THAT THE VIETNAMESE WERE TOUGHER THAN THE CAMBODIANS, AND ALSO ENJOINED THE SUPPORT OF THE USSR. ALTHOUGH THE CHINESE SUPPORTED THE CAMBODIANS, THEY HAD THE PROBLEM OF GEOGRAPHICAL SEPARATION FROM CAMBODIA. "WHAT ARE THEY GOING TO DO," PM LEE ASKED, "MARCH VOLUNTEERS THROUGH LAOS?" OAKLEY AGREED THAT THE CAMBODIAN-VIETNAMESE FIGHTING CREATED A COMPLEX SITUATION, AS HAD BEEN REMARKED UPON AT THE U.S. CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING IN HONG KONG.

9. AS THE MEETING CONCLUDED, OAKLEY OBSERVED THAT THE CONSENSUS OF THE U.S. AMBASSADORS AT THE CHIEFS OF MISSION MEETING WAS THAT CAMBODIA AND VIETNAM APART, THE REGION APPEARED TO BE IN GOOD SHAPE. THERE WERE NO AREAS OF GREAT POLITICAL INSTABILITY, AND GOOD ECONOMIC PROGRESS WAS BEING ACHIEVED. PM LEE AGREED, AND IN FACT APPEARED TO BE IN (FOR HIM) A MOOD OF OPTIMISM AS OAKLEY AND I LEFT THE ROOM.  
HOLDRIDGE

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## Message Attributes

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